Human Events *A Weekly Analysis for the American Citizen*

Editorial Office 1710 Rhode Island Ave., N. W., WASHINGTON 6, D. C. *Telephone* NATIONAL 2066

VOL. VI, NO. 7, *Issue Number* 264, FEBRUARY 16, 1949 ★ *Editors:* FELIX MORLEY & FRANK C. HANIGHEN

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN LIBRARIES FEB 23 1949

THAT NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY

by Felix Morley

In his statement of February 9, condemning the vicious persecution of Cardinal Mindszenty, Secretary of State Acheson took occasion to attack all governmental procedures in Communist Hungary.

Mr. Acheson noted that in Hungary: "Parliamentary opposition, an element indispensable to the democratic process, has been ruthlessly eliminated." Then he added: "The people of the United States . . . are sickened and horrified by these developments and fully comprehend the threat they constitute to free institutions everywhere."

There is no question that the American people are "sickened and horrified" by the actions of the Communist tyranny in Hungary and elsewhere. But a good many Americans also remember that it was our own government, with Mr. Acheson even then prominent in its councils, which acquiesced in the Soviet occupation of Hungary, to say nothing of Communist infiltration of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria and much of Austria and Germany as well.

So it is somewhat naive, to say the least, for Mr. Acheson, who served the Roosevelt Administration well, to be critical now of the results of our earlier ardent flirtation with Communism. It is only a little over five years since President Roosevelt, on December 24, 1943, told the American people that "I got along fine" with Stalin. This "stalwart" Communist dictator, Mr. Roosevelt said further "is truly representative of the heart and soul of Russia; and I believe that we are going to get along very well with him . . . very well indeed!"

It is not Stalin who has changed in the interim. In 1944, as twenty years earlier when he pledged himself to the cause of atheistic world revolution at Lenin's bier, Stalin was working to destroy all "democratic processes". And if Secretary Acheson is really surprised by the present logical application of Stalin's philosophy in Hungary, the blame for retarded education cannot fairly be placed on the Kremlin.

II

Short of another war -- this time to destroy Soviet Russia and rebuild a powerful Germany -- there is little we can now do to save the helpless millions of people whom we have turned over to the tender mercies of Communism. But Secretary Acheson, however shortsighted in the

Copyright 1949 by HUMAN EVENTS, INC.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

past, has currently made an observation of great cogency. It is his statement, already quoted, that: "Parliamentary opposition [is] an element indispensable to the democratic process."

The Secretary of State thereby passes much-needed criticism on the so-called "bi-partisan foreign policy", which has so far meant in effect that parliamentary criticism in this field is eliminated here as completely as in Communist Hungary. Mr. Acheson is to be congratulated for thus indirectly denouncing the pusillanimous Republican leadership in Congress. And it may be hoped that the words of the Secretary will encourage the most careful Congressional scrutiny of the so-called North Atlantic Defense Pact, now under preparation in the Department of State.

The precise content of this projected treaty, on which the great minds in the Department of State have been working for months, is still a carefully guarded secret. These officials are quick to denounce infringement of "the democratic process" under the Soviet tyranny. They are much more cautious about "open covenants, openly arrived at" when it is a matter of upholding the democratic process at home.

The Department of State, however, has prepared the groundwork for this treaty carefully. It bases its legal case on two earlier governmental actions. One of these is the adoption of the United Nations Charter, in which it is stated (Article 51):

> "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security."

A second justification for the projected North Atlantic Treaty is found in the so-called "Vandenberg Resolution", adopted by the Senate on June 11, 1948. In principle this indorsed "association of the United States by Constitutional process" in collective security arrangements within the United Nations framework. In debate on the resolution (May 22) Senator Vandenberg assured the Senate that no European alliance would be underwritten without specific Congressional approval.

The Department of State is trying manfully to turn the Vandenberg Resolution, and Article 51 of the Charter, into two pillars for the support of the North Atlantic Treaty. It can only be done by a tour de force. The projected treaty is clearly designed as a military alliance of some members of the United Nations directed against other members (the Soviet bloc) of the United Nations. And to assert that the UN Charter ever contemplated such a travesty is absurd on the face of it.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Vandenberg Resolution, on the other hand, specifically stated that subsequent treaties must be in accordance with the Constitution of the United States, and that provision undermines the contemplated alliance.

III

Among the powers vested in Congress by the Constitution is that of declaring war. Section 8 of Article I says flatly: "The Congress shall have power . . . to declare war."

From the viewpoint of an autocratic administration, willing to make war an instrument of national policy, this is a most unfortunate provision. One of the great assets of a dictatorship is absolute control of foreign policy, including the right to declare war at what seems to the dictator the correct psychological moment. That comes when people have been so conditioned by governmental propaganda as to believe that an act of aggression by their leader is really an act of national self-defense. This was the Hitler-Goebbels technique, and they were good at it.

The Constitutional provision that only Congress can declare war is not very much of a safeguard against the will of a President determined to go to war, as we learned in 1940-41. But it does raise difficulties. It means that a state of war cannot be imposed on the American people automatically, and to that extent it hampers the executive will. Naturally enough, the other parties to the projected North Atlantic Alliance are not interested in the liberty of the American people. If we cannot preserve self-government it is not the business of others to give us lessons on the subject. So Great Britain and France have stipulated, very naturally, that in the proposed military alliance we should go to war automatically if they are attacked.

That request is currently causing headaches for the Department of State. It is a reasonable enough request, under the age-old pattern of European thinking. The very essence of the European alliance system is that if one ally goes to war, the others automatically become belligerents. But the men who wrote our Constitution had the temerity to despise what George Washington called "entangling alliances". So they put into the Constitution that awkward little provision about Congress. Secretary Acheson, believing as he does in the desirability of Congressional opposition, can scarcely wish to circumvent it.

IV

But Secretary Acheson, with the enthusiasm of a new appointee to a post of command, has been making his difficult job even harder than it needed to be. It wasn't easy to work out a binding military alliance

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

confined to ourselves, Canada, Britain, France and the Benelux nations. The Dutch, for instance, have pointed out that if the Netherlands decides to smash the Indonesian Republic, and if we are an ally of the Netherlands, then we too should line up against those aggressive Javanese natives.

All that has been tough for the Department of State. Yet Mr. Acheson has proceeded to enlarge the problem. Even before the alliance in its original design was concluded he sought to bring the Scandinavian countries into it. And there he has met a diplomatic defeat which would seem crushing if our diplomacy were not so well accustomed to reverses.

The obstacle encountered by this diplomacy, when it sought to bring Scandinavia into the projected alliance, was the traditional neutrality of Sweden. The hard-headed Swedes, like the Swiss, successfully sat out the last two wars. They are perfectly willing to sit out a third in the series. And it is difficult for us to tell the Swedes that since the establishment of the United Nations, the concept of neutrality is meaningless. The obvious retort is that the United Nations, as our diplomacy set it up, has even less meaning. Only Americans are fooled by our feverish effort to build an alliance against Russia "within the framework of the United Nations".

The wholly intelligible Swedish plan is for a Scandinavian neutrality pact, embracing Norway and Denmark. If we could offer the Norwegians and Danes an automatic guaranty of military aid, we might be able to seduce them from the side of Sweden. But Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution prevents. And -- again thanks to Mr. Roosevelt's trust in the "stalwart" Stalin -- both Norway and Denmark are far too open to Russian occupation to invite that fate without even a "moral commitment" from us.

Secretary Acheson is not unique in sketching out policies which look magnificent, but wither away before the cold winds from Russia. Where Mr. Acheson differs, from his immediate predecessors at the swinging tiller of the Department of State, is in his frank tribute to the value of that parliamentary criticism which he rightly calls "indispensable to the democratic process".

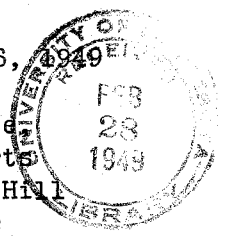
It now seems certain that the State Department planners will get this criticism, and nobody is likely to call it premature. Of considerable significance in domestic politics is the fact that the first real rumblings of opposition to the proposed North Atlantic Alliance come from Senator Tom Connally, the old-fashioned Democrat who now sits as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Quotation up to a paragraph is permitted with credit to HUMAN EVENTS. For reproduction or more extensive quotation address requests to HUMAN EVENTS, 1710 Rhode Island Avenue, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Trial subscription, three months for $3. Six months, $5.50. One year, $10. Two years, $18. Domestic airmail (including APO and FPO) and foreign (regular mail) one year, $11. Foreign airmail rates on request. Please remit in U.S.A. DOLLARS. Allow two weeks for new subscriptions or change of address to become effective.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VI, No. 7

By Frank C. Hanighen February 16, 1949



CONGRESS: The Duchess in Alice in Wonderland remarked, "Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves." But Mr. Truman's economic experts apparently were more interested in sounds than sense when they went up to the Hill this past week. It was indeed a Lewis Carroll spectacle -- the great economic "minds" warning solemnly of the dangers of inflation to a Congressional audience concerned only about deflation. You have to hand it to him -- Mr. Leon Keyserling stuck to his script on inflation, despite the inharmonious noises from the crashing commodity markets. Poor Mr. Brannan, however, proved too sensitive to what was going on in the outside world and after a courageous attempt to invoke the shade of inflation, ended lamely by admitting that the agricultural boom was over.

To add to the confusion, Mr. Marriner Eccles of the Federal Reserve Board provided a strange obligato to the falsettos of Messrs. Keyserling and Brannan; at least, according to a rumor running around the Hill. Mr Eccles, it was reported, is worried about deflation and has a cure -- reduction of stock exchange margins from the present 75 per cent to 10 per cent. We have not been able to confirm the story. But we do recall that Mr. Eccles for many years was a staunch upholder of the economic theories of Lord Keynes -- to which Mr. Keyserling strictly adheres. It would be very amusing, indeed, to hear the former Keynsian, Mr. Eccles, taking his text from the scriptures of Adam Smith. But then, Mr. Eccles is nothing if not versatile.

However much conservatives may laugh at the contortions of a Keyserling, we feel in our bones that they may soon not be amused when the Administration decides to admit that the sun is no longer shining. Having loudly called for measures to keep prices down, the Administration may soon be proposing remedies for keeping prices up. One observer on the Hill predicted that next the White House would call for a great and glamorous public works program. And another -- a wicked fellow -- is forecasting a new NRA. Why not; since this is Wonderland?

But, in one area on Capitol Hill, there has been some intelligible talking. We refer to the proceedings in the Senate Committee on Labor: the hearings on the Taft-Hartley and Wagner legislation. It is generally agreed that members of the Committee, both pro and con, have done a very good job of questioning and discussion. Most of them seem to be well briefed on the problems involved and put good, specific (not general) questions. The proceedings of too many committees are marked by ignorant fumblings, time-wasting arguments about points on which there should have been common understanding, and worst of all by blatant oratory for the benefit of constituents and pressure groups. This committee's record will be a pleasure to read.

* * * * *

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY: Mr. Dean Acheson is apparently writhing most uncomfortably in the embrace of his North Atlantic Security Pact. The Norwegian Foreign Minister dashed over to see him, and left after Mr. Acheson showed little precise knowledge of what would be U. S. commitments under the Pact. Senators Connally and Vandenberg added to the Secretary's unhappiness by talking sternly of the powers of the Upper Chamber, in such matters as declaring war. Will the Defense Pact founder? If it does, some experts in the Pentagon will not be dissatisfied. These military gentlemen regard the proposed military alliance as a delusion and snare. They argue their case as follows:

Copyright 1949 by Human Events, Inc.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The pact has been designed to create an army on the Continent capable of stoping a Russian Army advancing westward. And this mission the proposed setup will certainly not accomplish. It is doubtful if any army formed on the Continent in the foreseeable future could do this. But the present scheme has the slightest chance of all. The present plan is to arm France (40 divisions), Belgium (8 divisions), Holland (8 divisions), England (12 divisions), Italy (20 divisions). These forces, plus a couple of U. S. divisions, would add up to about 90 divisions. It would take much more than that to hold the line against the Red Army. Besides, 36 divisions would be Belgian, Dutch and Italian -- which forces could actually put up only a token resistance. The Italian Army, as a matter of fact, has proved a liability to its allies in the two World Wars. Also, recalling the experience of 1940, there is some doubt that the French Army would be 100 per cent effective by itself. The fact is that this heterogeneous European army would really possess only a fraction of its real divisional strength. The only possible barrier to the Red Army would be a Franco-German Army. Every General Staff in Europe knows this, but for political reasons says nothing. "For political reasons" -- therein lies the kernel of the North Atlantic Pact. It is a political, not a military, project.

* * * * *

EISENHOWER: If Columbia University sees much more of Eisenhower, a lot of people who have been talking to us will be surprised. It is believed that the General has had his eye set on the new job of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for some time. Those who know him believe he will build it up into a permanent job. The object of the creation of this new position is to straighten out the chaotic differences between the services. Forrestal, however good an administrator, has never felt he had the military knowledge or prestige to perform the task. Now Eisenhower may or may not be a great military genius. Some who sarcastically say that he's "our greatest general since Burnside", freely admit that he has great political and diplomatic talents, amply shown during the war. Therefore, they argue, Ike can really unify the services, if anyone can. So, if he proves successful, the chances are that he will toss the mortarboard into the discard.

* * * * *

SPY REPORT: The Army's report on the Communist spy ring in Japan is an extraordinary piece of business. It is rather unusual that a Government report, especially from the Army, should be written in the style of an Edgar Wallace thriller. But that is not what primarily interested us in the matter. To make our point, let us recite the main features of the Army document, as presented in the press. A German Communist agent disguised as a Nazi, performed some valuable services for the Kremlin in Tokyo in 1941. Among other achievements, he informed Stalin that Japan would not attack Russia. This intelligence enabled Stalin to transfer badly needed divisions from the Far East to European Russia, to stop Hitler's armies. What impressed us was that none of the news stories of, or news comments on, the Army report even suggested that the Kremlin spy had rendered a service to the world coalition against Hitler, including the United States. On the contrary, the reader was left with the implication that the Soviet agent had been consistently and villainously working against the interests of the United States, even in 1941. We now come to our point: Is the dizzy turn of world events subtly alerting the public's former approval of the Roosevelt anti-Axis and pro-Soviet policy?

* * * * *

MINDSZENTY: There is something genuine about the statements of European leaders when they invoke Clio's muse, something real which doesn't appear in so many American pronouncements on foreign policy. When Churchill or Stalin, or some other

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

European figure displays a "sense of history", we listen attentively. When Mr. Bohlen or Mr. Acheson talks ex cathedra, one has a bored feeling that some preposterous researcher has dug up a phony thesis from, say, Walter Lippmann, for the occasion. Churchill or Stalin, on the other hand, obviously know their history; possess it in the very fiber of their beings. This thought came to mind as we listened last night to an Hungarian recently come to this country.

He was describing a talk he had with Cardinal Mindszenty about a year ago. The Cardinal, according to our friend, expressed himself somewhat as follows: "The role of Hungary in early modern times was to stop the advance of the Ottoman Empire into the heart of Western, Christian civilization. At great cost and many martyrdoms, we Hungarians did it. Again, today, we have a role to fill, and we have a special fitness. The neighboring Slav nations cannot do it -- their Slavic languages and civilization make them too sensitive to Russian Communist influences. But we are not a Slav people. Our race is innately resistant to what the Russians seek to accomplish. We shall suffer, but in the end we shall have provided key resistance to the anti-Christian advance of Russia into Europe. Therefore, it is my duty to stay and lead this resistance, whatever may be the cost to my person."

* * * * *

DRESDEN: The fourth anniversary of the Anglo-American destruction of Dresden has been celebrated in the Eastern zone of Germany by a burst of Soviet propaganda, reciting this and other sins of the West. Oddly enough -- or perhaps not so oddly -- an anti-Semitic paper in this country seizes on the same horrible episode, attributing it to the Elders of Zion. Now, the fact that both anti-Semites and Communists seek to exploit our bombing of Dresden should not blind us to the fact that it was an atrocity; our atrocity. In these pages two years ago, we described how the British and American bombers (the Americans had far the greater responsibility) attacked a city which had virtually no military value, literally burned to death many thousands of non-combatants including war-wounded, and demolished most of Dresden's famous cultural monuments.

While reflecting on this somber fact, we picked up a remarkable report by Justice Robert H. Jackson on the Nuremberg process. Last Saturday the State Department released the report, a thick volume containing the minutes of the negotiations between the various members of the International War Crimes Tribunal, preliminary to the Nuremberg trials. The justices were laying down the rules of procedure and defining the nature of the crimes. On July 25, 1945, at a session of the Tribunal, the members were discussing a draft defining violations of the rules of war, for which violations they were unctuously preparing to try the German leaders. But, at the last moment, Justice Jackson apparently discovered that "judging in our own cause" might involve some embarrassments. So, (page 380 of the Report) we find him saying: ". . . we have left out of our draft the destruction of villages and towns, because I have seen the villages and towns of Germany. I think that you will have great difficulty distinguishing between the military necessity for that kind of destruction from some done by the Germans, assuming the war to be legitimate. It seems to me those subjects invite recriminations that would not be useful in the trial." We leave to our readers the privilege of examining the rich implications of such a statement.

Fortunately, we find one happy instance where the example of Nuremberg is not followed. Nuremberg sought to give the odious ex post facto principle international sanction. It is reassuring to note that the Jews who suffered so much from "kangaroo justice" have taken heed of one principle which our Constitution upholds and which a Supreme Court justice dishonored. In the new proposed Constitution of the State of Israel appears this section: "No one shall be convicted of any infringement of the law which did not constitute an offense when it was committed."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Book Events

Essays on Freedom and Power, by John Emerich Dalberg-Acton, First Baron Acton; selected, and with an Introduction by Gertrude Himmelfarb. Boston: The Beacon Press. $5.00. Reviewed by J. M. Lalley.

Considering the frequency with which Lord Acton is mentioned nowadays, and the influence of his thought on so many present-day political theorists, such as the Messrs. Hayek and von Mises, it has seemed to me inexplicable that the five volumes which contain his writings should be totally out of print. Now and then, in conversations with representatives of publishing houses, I have mentioned the need of a new edition; but such interest as I was able to awaken was soon dampened by the fear that a need so apparent had already been recognized by some competitor. Indeed, I have since heard of several Acton anthologies, or "readers" which were projected and then abandoned through the same fear. Thus Miss Himmelfarb's collection of Acton's essays, though still inadequate to the need, is nevertheless an event of importance. Within the limitations imposed by the format, Miss Himmelfarb's selections seem to me in the main well chosen. Her problem, of course, was not so much what to include as what to omit; and she was doubtless aware that whatever her decision she would open herself to the reproach of having neglected something of great value.

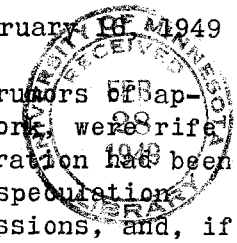
Thus it would be ungrateful to complain that Miss Himmelfarb has given us only a short excerpt from the Lectures on the French Revolution or to wish she had spared two or three pages for Lord Acton's list of the hundred books that, as he said, signalize the great turning points in the History of European thought. At any rate she has included the two famous essays on the History of Freedom (which are all that resulted from his laborious preparation for the vast work he had projected on the subject), his essay on The Causes of the American Revolution, his monograph on the Vatican Council and some controversial pieces from the Rambler and the Home and Foreign Review. She also reproduces his letter to the Anglican Bishop Creighton which contains his aphorism about the corrupting tendencies of power, and it is to be hoped that the journalists who are fond of quoting it, sometimes in very strange contexts, will hereafter get it straight.

Lord Acton was a Catholic and the nephew of a Cardinal, the first of his faith to be elevated to the British peerage since the Reformation and the first to be given a chair in one of the great English universities. But he was often a source of great embarrassment to his coreligionists for he passed many stern judgments upon the historical behavior of churchmen who were held in high veneration, and was difficult to controvert because of his vast learning. As a pupil of the famous Doellinger, who was excommunicated for his refusal to accept the dogma of Papal Infallibility, Acton fell under deep suspicion; yet he has found sympathetic biographers in the late Cardinal Gasquet and the living Bishop Mathew. He was in all matters a liberal. He defined liberalism as the doctrine that freedom is not a means to an end but in itself the highest political end. But, as Miss Himmelfarb observes, Acton's liberalism has little in common with the Manchester liberalism of John Stuart Mill and even less with the Continental Catholic liberalism of Montelembert and Lamennais. It arose from his rigidly moral interpretation of history. He held that political crime is far worse than private crime and homicide for political reasons worse than murder for money or jealousy or personal vengeance. No political crime may be condoned or palliated because of time or place or circumstances or motive. The more revered the personage, and the nobler the end he professed or the cause he served, the more necessity for severity of judgment; and in this Acton made no exception of canonized saints.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

European Supplement *to* Human Events Vol. VI, No. 7

By Bertrand de Jouvenel February 16, 1949



IMAGINARY INTERVIEW: Weeks before Mr. Stalin's recent peace offer, rumors of appeasement, fostered by dispatches from press correspondents in New York, were rife in the capitals of Continental Europe. The same psychological preparation had been noted in the case of previous peace offensives. It is a subject of speculation whether the determination of Washington is subject to cyclical depressions, and, if not, how these dispatches come to be broadcast to Europe from the sounding board of New York. Such "peace forebodings" raise everywhere the hopes of the credulous, who are doomed in the end to disappointment at the final "no" from the White House or the State Department and are then ready to believe that some intervention by "Wall Street reactionaries and military Fascists" has cut short a promising opening. These periods of doubt have the further effect of breeding distrust among firm resisters to Stalinism, who come to dread another unfurling of Chamberlain's umbrella.

For the benefit of those who cherish the idea that we must some time reach an understanding with Stalin, I would like to set out the frame of mind in which it would be necessary for us to embark on this undertaking. As it seems the fashion to interview the Kremlin despot, I have indicated the conditions to which we should have to subscribe, in order to reach agreement, in the form of an imaginary conversation with the great man. I guarantee that this conversation is completely apocryphal. Here is what the imaginary interviewer asked and the answers which, in my view, Mr. Stalin would have been sure to give.

Q. - Mr. Stalin, is there any obstacle to world peace other than our malevolent misunderstanding of the great Soviet Union?

A. - None.

Q. - What should be our attitude toward the Soviet Union?

A. - The normal attitude towards a very great Power, your ally in a war against Nazi Germany and the chief artisan of the common victory.

That is to say, you should abstain from criticizing our domestic institutions, which are the concern of the Russian people, and you should sympathize with the policies which we, like you, are led to pursue by our legitimate national interests. We have, for instance, a sphere of interests in which we see to it that no hostile propaganda capable of endangering our national security is carried on. Also, we must repair our war damage and build up our economy: if we are led to make rather heavy drafts upon the resources of countries lying in our sphere of interests, that should be looked on as excusable. In short, within the limits of our sphere, we want a free hand in the use of our strength: we do not want to be impeded and we do not want to be maligned on what you are pleased to call moral grounds.

Q. - That is quite clear, Mr. Stalin. Now how about reciprocity?

A. - The international attitude of the Soviet Government is perfectly correct.

Q. - How about your continual efforts to disturb other countries, to subvert their institutions and overthrow their governments?

A. - Such a question can only be put by an ignorant representative of a corrupt press. From your colleagues I have disallowed it. But I am willing to enlighten you. You confuse two things: the Soviet Government and the international Communist movement: the hope and future of humanity. What

Copyright 1949 by Human Events, Inc.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is happening in the various countries is nothing but the proletariat's historical effort to shake off the exploiting rule of the bourgeoisie, served by the police power of the bourgeois State. I am informed that the Chinese people are doing well, but, so far as the Soviet Government is concerned, that is, of course, entirely the internal affair of China.

Q. - Would you then say, Mr. Stalin, that democratic States would be entitled to suppress the Communist parties and apply press censorships as you do in Russia?

A. - That, I must say, would be infamous behavior. It would be treason to everything these governments pretend to stand for, and a revelation, in fact, of their real character, which is an oppressive one.

Q. - Well, Mr. Stalin, I agree with you that it would be bad. But why should you not apply the same reasoning to your own country? How about letting an opposition form, express itself, have contacts with foreign sympathizers and so on?

A. - Have you forgotten that I told you it is mischievous and detrimental to international relations to comment offensively upon our internal affairs which are a purely national concern?

Q. - Yes, Mr. Stalin. Now what do you think of this Hungarian Cardinal who has, we understand, been sentenced to life imprisonment for some communication with the Vatican and the American Ambassador?

A. - While this affair is purely an internal concern of the Hungarian Government, the sentence seems to me justified on the grounds of treason. It has always been admitted that each country is sovereign and entitled to judge as to what is or is not treason.

Q. - Yes, Mr. Stalin. Now how about the "red Dean of Canterbury" who is, I understand, not altogether out of touch with the Soviets and could with equal plausibility be taxed with treason if your conception of it were adopted? What would you say to his arrest?

A. - In my character as a member of the Soviet Government, it would be none of my business. I should, of course, think it a blatant betrayal of the rights of man.

I doubt if even a Communist reader could take exception to this statement of the case. It is, in fact, the case for an intolerant church that has obtained control of an empire, that in its behavior as a political power claims all the privileges ascribed to a sovereign by political realism in its more extreme forms, and that claims for its missionaries and believers in the lands of the gentiles all the consideration shown by us -- rightly, as I think -- to the holders of the faith. The resulting situation would in any case be difficult: it is made much worse by the fact that in its temporal administration of the Soviet Empire the Communist "church" displays a brutal cynicism, entirely foreign to our ideas of international relations, and by the fact that the creed it seeks to spread outside its temporal realm is a creed of hatred.

That such a creed can be mistaken by quite a number of Christians for "a second wave of the Christian revolution" is a terrifying sign of the weakened hold of Christianity. That such behavior, both domestic and foreign, as that of the Russian State can receive countenance from quite a number of public men and intellectuals is a terrifying sign that the moral indignation aroused by the conduct of Nazi Germany no longer finds a place in certain minds. Moral indignation is now a mere memory, still able to ostracize a great and innocuous pianist but no longer concerned to intervene on behalf of suffering millions.

* * *

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHY COMMUNISM? From probing the minds of the Ifugas and the Bathonga, the social science of today has now turned to probing the minds of our fellow citizens with a view to discovering their attitude to sex and kindred subjects. It might also be interesting to investigate the appeal of Stalinism, with a view to discovering whose imagination is favorably affected by which of its virtues. The effort is well worth making since here, beyond question, is the challenge, moral and political, to our civilization.

Among the interesting facts which such an investigation might bring to light, one, I think, would stand out: The Communist in Western Europe is not interested at all in what goes on inside Russia. To him, unpleasing descriptions are lies because they are unpleasing, and he pays no attention to disagreeable facts. Neither do the glowing descriptions put out by Russian propaganda affect him much: he tends to find them merely boring. The Communist regime in being does not excite his curiosity: he is wrapped in his dreams of the Communist regime that is to be. It would be no exaggeration to say that he enjoys his hope the more from its sub-conscious retention as an "other-worldly" picture. Nothing exasperates a Communist more than the suggestion that "a Socialist Society" can be achieved by means other than an earth-shaking event: he goes into tantrums if told that the "building of Socialism" is proceeding gradually in England. It almost seems as if he is afraid of getting the substance without the dream.

It is indeed a laughable idea, besides being a libel on man's nature and a judgment on the minds that conceive it, that Communism is born of and fed by material appetities. Nothing could be less true. It is the fruit of a spiritual hunger -- the outcome of the Nineteenth Century's great offensive against God. The void created in men's consciences had to be filled.

This need is, it is true, least felt wherever an abundant stream of consumer goods, pressed on men's attention by artful advertisements, keeps them from thinking on the why and wherefore of their presence in the world. Their attentions can then be focused on their commitments under schemes of instalment buying. Spiritual needs are pushed into the mind's background. But let material expansion once flag, and then these natural needs grow clamant again. Herein is probably the underlying reason that urges us to keep the boom going -- a Keynesian preoccupation, related to a sense of the moral precariousness of a purely economic Society.

So well appreciated is this moral precariousness that all of us go in fear of another depression in the United States, through which could enter the various bogus religions that plague us in Europe: of these Communism is only the worst and the most widespread. There is, then, much to be said for the policy of embarking Europe on the American adventure of continuous expansion. But this, let it never be forgotten, is but a palliative.

In a way it resembles our policy of "containing" Russia. No reasonable man could expect success from such a policy alone. There must always be weak points in the line through which the Soviet offensive will break. Just in the same way the policy of "containing" man's spiritual hunger by means of full employment and rising incomes must at times develop flaws through which spiritual dissatisfaction will break.

The real problems are here.

* * *

EUROPEAN UNITY: The French attitude toward Germany is changing rapidly in one direction and the British attitude seems to be changing somewhat in the other. The evolution of French opinion is due to the ardent belief that there must be a "Europe" and that this implies getting on with the Germans. This feeling is now being voiced in the most varied circles. British industrialists and trade-unionists are in the meantime becoming worried over the competition they are bound to face from German exports, as German industrial power gets increasingly into its stride.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Their respective evolutions should bring the French and the English closer together. Unfortunately, this has not happened. The French blame the English for the slow pace at which Western Union proceeds. At a recent distinguished gathering of Continental politicians and journalists, I was impressed to find an almost general conviction that England is holding everything up and that "Europe" can be built up only if England is counted out. For myself I regard this appreciation of British opinion as erroneous and the conclusion drawn as dangerous. Obviously, however, Mr. Bevin's petty reaction to the role played by Mr. Churchill does great harm to British popularity on the Continent, where there is always a smouldering resentment against "perfidious Albion" waiting for fresh fuel. The underlying cause of this resentment is, I would say, that England cut a more glorious figure than any of us in the recent war.

While I am on the subject of prevailing tensions in the sphere of the West, I should not, I think, omit to notice that American anti-colonialism is causing in Europe a growing irritation. Andre Siegfried writes very pungently on the subject, noting that while on the one hand the United States is upholding the Western nations, on the other it is busy dismantling the colonial empires without which the Western nations must be collectively Volk ohne Raum. While the relationship between the Europeans and the people of dependent territories needs altering and is in fact being altered rapidly, there are those who say that American incomprehension of the problem involved is very detrimental to Europe. Though personally ignorant of these problems, I find that any espousal on my part of current American views about colonialism is apt to draw the exasperated reply that, had all natives received the treatment accorded to the Indians of America, we should have no colonial problems in places like the East Indies.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of the case may be, it looks as if there were a dividing line in the Atlantic community somewhat similar to that between the Northern and Southern states in days before the Civil War. On the one hand are the United States and the British Dominions, who are abolitionists where colonialism is concerned, on the other are the European States, who demand its preservation, or rather its progressive modification. The antagonism on this score is still in its infancy and we can only await its development.

I must note the agreement to call a European Consultative Assembly as an event of great importance. The United States might do worse than give it status by writing into the new ECA law a demand that the European Assembly report to the United States Congress before the 1950-51 grant is made. In this way the European Assembly would be worked into the fabric of international relations.

* * *

KRAVCHENKO: In Paris, the Kravchenko suit has been up till now a great triumph for the plaintiff. He has pressed his case against Russia manfully, and the personal counterattacks made on him have lacked punch. The fellow travellers he is fighting have, it seems, been let down by Moscow, which has not, up till the time of writing, produced the "decisive witnesses" promised. A considerable impression has been made on the middle classes, but the working classes seem quite indifferent. An illustrated weekly with unavowed Communist affiliations certainly did well for its side by some seemingly innocuous photographs of Kravchenko's life in Paris; in these he appears as a brisk, manicured, high-living business executive, renting a room at a hotel for some ten dollars a day, as against a worker's rent of less than one dollar a month. The populace is quite prepared to believe that Kravchenko's standard of life is the price of his "treason" to Russia, and overlooks the probability that he acquired both his standard of life and his somewhat overbearing manner while in the enjoyment of class privilege in Russia.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED